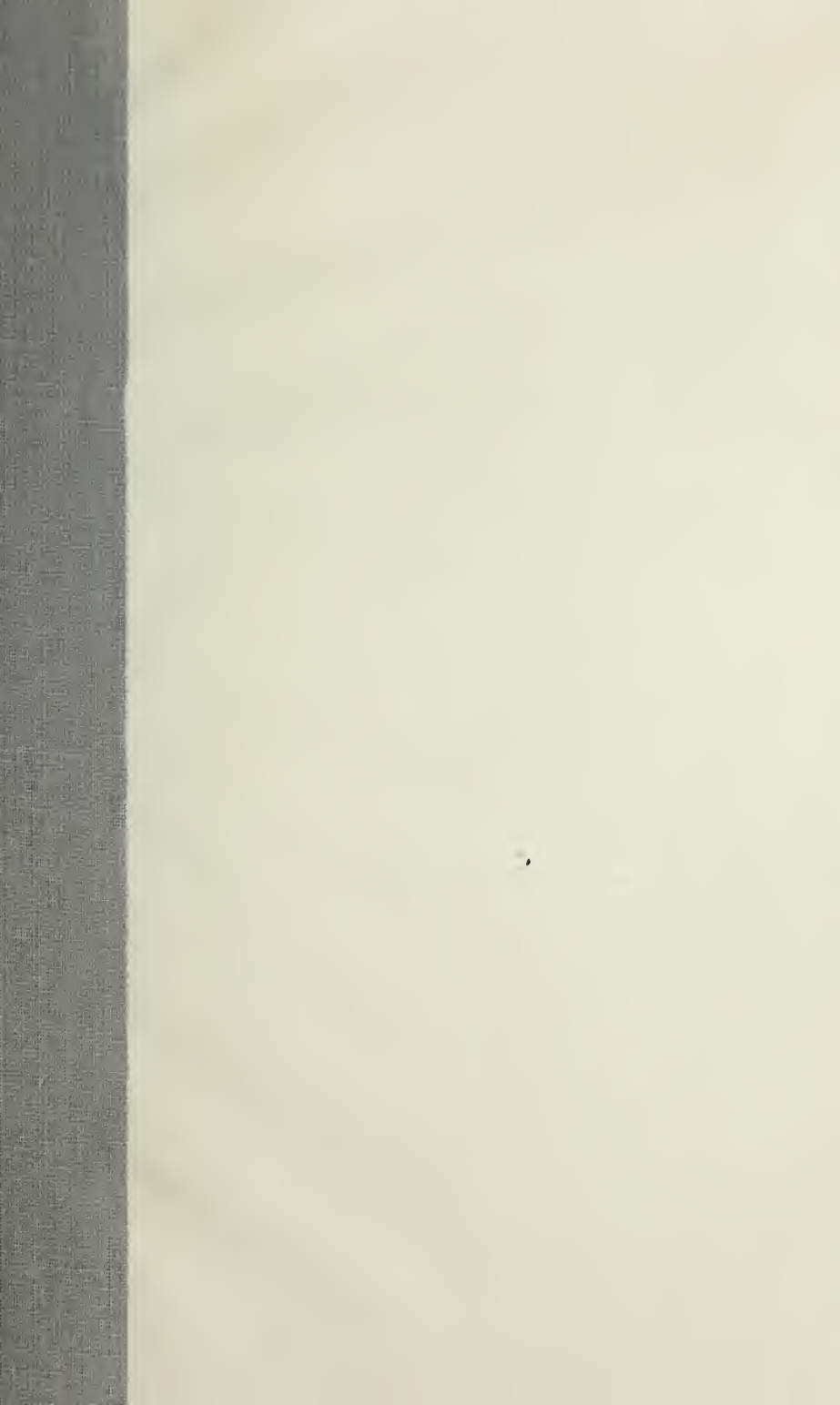


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OF REV. JOHN A. W. HAAS, D.D.
PRESIDENT OF MUHLENBERG COLLEGE



ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
JUNE 22, 1904

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Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen :

In accepting the keys of Muhlenberg College and assuming the responsibilities and duties of its headship I can not do otherwise than, for a moment, look back upon those who have preceded. From the first president, whose choice Greek scholarship and whose kindly and affectionate Christian character make him still to be remembered, through the prudent direction of Muhlenberg's second president, to the work of the lamented, last president, who impressed himself by his careful knowledge no less than by his well-poised character and Christian, refined gentlemanliness upon all who knew him, there has been growth and progress amid much sacrifice. Quietly with the continued co-operation of a harmonious Faculty and Board Muhlenberg College has been forging ahead.

But now in the greater change of surroundings and equipment, in the larger demands of the present, in the growth of greater ideals in the Church, there is a call, not unjustified, for more marked progress and change. Such a call, however, needs to be taken up not as a quick inspiration, which shall work revolution, but which shall rather further evolution. A most careful and considered examination must be made of the whole place, sphere and purpose of Muhlenberg College, with the general as well as special educational needs in view, with regard to Muhlenberg College as a college and as an institution serving the interest of the Lutheran Church, and the Ministerium of Pennsylvania in particular. If we have such a clear conception, just to all sides, before us, we can then add all the enthusiasm and energy to the deliberate, balanced judgment of sound pedagogic wisdom.

It must not be forgotten, from the first, that Muhlen-

berg College, has like all colleges, a local character. There is a value in this. It forms the special individuality of a college and corresponds in a corporate way to the rights and necessity of single individuality. Muhlenberg College has grown upon a certain soil and has taken up of its elements. To deny and rudely disturb this local character would be as wrong as it would prove injurious. It is the local character which gives a college truer grasp and influence upon men, than a universal institution, growing out of ideals so broad and abstract that they fail to touch the reality of life in their own surroundings, can ever exercise.

But with all due consideration for the rightness of local character there must be combined the understanding of its dangers. As the marked individuality of a person can degenerate into idiosyncrasies, and the assertion of self can become untrue and narrow, so the emphasis upon local conditions, demands, rights can be, and has, in colleges, often been overstated. No matter what the soil may be, the rose finally is a rose ; there is something generic about it. So in all true life to its highest organic, personal and social form, the special dare not obliterate the general.

With the local the historic is naturally connected. We dare not overlook the fact, that Muhlenberg College, taking some of its ideals from Pennsylvania College, is a continuation of the educational life of the Lutheran Church, as organized in Pennsylvania College. But Muhlenberg College is more. It is that continued life developed under the differentiated surroundings of the Pennsylvania Ministerium. This venerable Ministerium has given it character, and in return has been determined by it more largely than is often realized. Now such true historic connection and interdependence must be so conserved that the mutual interests of the Ministerium and College are best served. The College dare never be independent of the Ministerium's life, but it ought to be free from its politics. The Ministerium ought never forget its child, but it ought not so dominate it that the real freedom and highest development of the child is dwarfed.

True development demands that, without excluding the special historic place, the greater cause of the whole Church shall be kept in view. As the Pennsylvania Ministerium is not the only member of the body of the Lutheran Church in America, as it is not an end in itself, but only, with all its history and power, a means for serving the whole Church and the Kingdom of God, so the College, which the Ministerium calls its own, must be made the expression and inspirer of the wider outlook upon the large interests of God's Kingdom.

To accomplish this wider purpose Muhlenberg College must be made representative. What Philadelphia in its Seminary has become to the Eastern Church in influencing its theological ideals and conceptions, that, in the sphere of collegiate education for our Church, Muhlenberg College ought to become, interpreting the best modern pedagogic thought and practice in a most harmonious Christian, and consequently Lutheran, sense for the benefit of its young men and the inspiration of Lutheran sister-institutions. But such interpretation must be made not with the overbalancing accent upon the interpretation, but with regard to the broad purpose of the best collegiate education. In this manner the right and place of Muhlenberg College will be increasingly justified not only in the Church, but also in the educational life of Pennsylvania, and in the larger educational work of our land.

Preliminary to the special sphere of the College and very important for the readier development of its ideals is the Academy. Muhlenberg College is historically linked to its Academy. And this historic bond, if ever of worth, is now most valuable. For the onward and forward march will make it imperative that some of the College's first year work shall be thrown back into the Academy, as soon as this is firmly reorganized and expanded. To foster the College implies for the present the development of the Academy. It must receive the best thought and equipment. When this is being accomplished then will Muhlenberg's growth be accelerated. Muhlenberg can then be less and less of that

mixture of high school and real college which marks so many of our smaller institutions. It will take its place fully among the best colleges in actual work and demands. It can require the Academy to slough off some of the natural and local obstructions that now hinder the College.

But not merely for this reason must we emphasize the development of the Academy. Its growth should stimulate other centers of our Church, when the first necessary demands here are met, to found similar academies to feed the College. These academies should be broad enough to satisfy any students preparing for any college, while their object should mainly be to upbuild Muhlenberg College.

But though the academies in general, and our Academy particularly, are important for the solution of the question of the advancement of Muhlenberg College, yet the College dare not wait for the Academy's success, nor finally rest its progress upon the Academy, nor excuse its lack of advance by the Academy's defects. And, therefore, while at the present the Academy must be emphasized, yet in the work of the College it will be necessary for the efficiency of both Academy and College that the separation be clearly made. Not only the demands of teaching, but also the intellectual and social life of the student body make such separate existence necessary.

Our central question, however, is to see clearly and determine fairly the province of the College. Determination includes right limitation. Definite limitation of the work is the first necessity, for in true limitation mastership consists.

The present danger of the small college is its desire to become large and emulate in its many courses and electives the great colleges and universities. In this endeavor the small college has often not yet lost the elements of the high school, nor has it fairly begun to limit itself as to what of preparatory character must be excluded. But of greater necessity is the question of undue expansion upward. Exclusion must be strongly exercised if the fable of the inflated frog is not to become reality. It is idle folly under the

college name, or with the deceptive assumption of the name of university, to presume to do what can not be done.

There is a large place for the real college. It can fill the gap between the preparatory school and the higher elective work of the university with its professional and technical courses. It is admitted by the leading educators that the high school is not sufficient for the best education of men who would succeed most truly in their professions. Nor, on the other hand, can the college attached to the great university most effectively bridge over from high school to technical work. The many electives and the early beginning of electives presuppose a ripeness in the student and a care in the choice of subjects which he does not possess. Even when advice is given and courses are judiciously combined this difficulty is not really obviated. In addition, the student in the great colleges may pass through and specialize so soon that he will lack the full knowledge of wider truth. It is possible for men to know merely an outline of logic in the great philosophical department, and yet be called liberally educated. Without a grasp upon history, with no balanced thought on moral problems, many graduate from the great institutions and receive the acknowledgement of liberal culture. The college in the real sense with a certain prescribed course that looks to general liberal culture, can develop the broadest men and prepare the way for the best specialists.

It is a strange contradiction when modern education grants such liberty to individualism that it almost denies anything fixed but the will of the individual, and yet claims the need of the social organism. The larger recognition of the common human life opposes the overbalanced emphasis of the individual. True education considers both the individual and the social body. It takes the individual into the great common life and prepares him not as he thinks, but as life and civilization demand. And this is done by developing every side, by strengthening the weaker faculties and in not suppressing the stronger ones. But, finally, such education looks to the excellence of the man himself. It

uses knowledge not as an end but as means. The intellectual foundations well and broadly laid, the aesthetic sensibilities carefully and soundly adjusted, the intrinsic moral character strongly and harmoniously developed, the religious longing truly chastened, sound, honest—all this marks a cultured, liberal man.

In the preparations for such general culture lies the work of the college. But to effect this aim the college must work thoroughly. Thoroughness does not mean exhaustiveness; but it does imply a good knowledge of the great principles. Men must be so educated that they know the large outlines of knowledge, the great sources and laws of truth, while they are so humble that they recognize their ignorance to stimulate them ever anew to the wider truth and growing culture which life opens to them. Such stimulus must move the students; especially when they are preparing for their particular work and equipping themselves most fully for their individual vocation. This is the ideal of what a college must seek to accomplish; and we can best sum up what a college should be in the words of Professor Chamberlain of Bowdoin College. It should be "a school of complete manhood, taking cognizance not only of what makes for good in the world, but regarding also the culture of the moral and spiritual powers which are the noblest endowments of personality."

With this ideal before us it becomes necessary to define our special work in Muhlenberg College having regard to our time and needs. We take over from ancient and mediaeval culture the study of mathematics with its exactness of reasoning and its impulse to careful deduction. The need of Latin to gain insight into Roman life to have the means of appreciating the power and influence of the city of the Seven Hills upon the law and the language of the modern world can also not be gainsayed.

But the language which was of later advent in mediaeval culture, the Greek, has in these later days been under much adverse criticism as to its value and interest. Men have forgotten that even to put the beginnings of it into the

power of a mind is of great worth in enabling a man to estimate the formative power of Greek thought and models upon modern civilization. Greek thought and Greek spirit are best found through the medium of the Greek tongue. Nevertheless even this study must be supplemented by reading in English to gain the wider understanding of what Hellas was and is for the world. Greek gives the possibility of weighing the original sources of Christianity, of gaining a glimpse of the early dogmatic formulation of Christian truth in Greek moulds. This knowledge is very necessary in these days for the intelligent man of culture if he is not to be carried away by much half-true speculation.

But while we begin with these elements of early culture, yet it is to be recognized that not in them alone will true education find its full effectiveness. Besides the two ancient languages we place the modern tongues.

The education for a scientific career, though it should not be totally ignorant of Greek ideals, will derive much advantage from the knowledge of French. The *esprit* and vividness of this tongue, with the understanding which it grants of the life of a Romance people, can not be neglected by any educated man. It is true that the importance of the French people has waned, but still there is no excuse for the neglect of French thought and language, so valuable in itself and so helpful as an introduction to the better knowledge of the Romance nations, which are now adding millions to our American population.

The modern language which, however, in addition to the tongue of the land, is most necessary is the German. Whether you desire to study the highest development of modern philosophical thought, whether you seek the most wonderful growth of a modern literature in the 18th and 19th centuries, whether you long for the deepest lyric needs of the soul in modern garb, whether you look for the most minute research of careful scholarship in moral, social or natural science, in linguistics or history, in medicine, law or theology, you must go to the German language. There is not an educated man of any standing or influence who does

not possess some hold upon strong and deep German thought. The value of this language, moreover, has a special importance for us here. We are where long a German life, as expressed in a dialect, has lived. For those who come out of this derived, modified life, it is well that they shall see the greater world from which they have come. To be strong they should know the rock whence they were hewn that, in casting off the defects of dialect, they may not underestimate the lasting value of Teutonic life for the culture of the world. Moreover in our Church even of the East we still have the German with us and need it to understand each other. Perhaps the growth of Muhlenberg College and its claim to meet the wants of all may make it necessary to consider whether, without injuring the balance of our whole work, we may not be called upon to aid in the problem of sound transition by a temporary concession to the needs and claims of the German-American life. We shall not seek this, but we may be called upon to meet it.

To these elements of culture and knowledge, modified by our conditions, we must add the value of natural science for every educated man. No one can live in this modern world and understand its trend without some knowledge of natural science and its way of reasoning. But in preparing men for life by teaching them to consider the fundamental laws of the physical, chemical and biological disciplines, we must be careful, in the scientific department, not to press in upon technical training. There are certain studies such as anatomy and histology, which, according to the best judgment of medical educators, can not be successfully taught in a college. Such and similar scientific studies, wherever they are attempted in a college, not only take away from the broad culture which the scientific student should have, but also add to the expense out of proportion to the general advantage for all. It would be far better, if, as seems to be admitted, that many men preparing for a scientific career can not give four years to collegiate study, to grant the scientific students their degree upon the completion of the first year's work in a technical school, and

to restrict the course in college to three years. Yet, perhaps, it would be possible to have an earlier beginning of preparatory study, and then to persuade the scientific student to take the full four years course for the final advantage of his vocation and for the wider outlook which will be his. No temporary question of expediency, no utilitarianism ought to move colleges to attempt what they can not do, and to enter upon any study which needs equipment and surroundings that can not be offered. Such work, even if it does save students a year, will often lead them to second-class technical schools instead of the best. Muhlenberg College should stimulate its graduates to take their post-graduate and professional work in the best and highest institutions of the land.

The modern man, if he would understand and yet not be misled by natural science, can not be without the knowledge of history. The present method of investigation, the underlying attitude in the arts and science is the historical. The search after origins and beginnings is simply the historical principle. Evolution in natural science is the counterpart of historical development in mankind. The balanced understanding of the great social problems, the grasp upon the mighty religious questions and discussions, can not be gained without historical insight. The college upon the facts of history is to lead to some knowledge of history's course and philosophy. It should seek to develop the historic sense, which will help students in every department and profession to meet problems by reference to past experiences, to trace and portray growth, to measure men and ages, and to get closer to the reality of characters as they lived and moved in their own time. The allowance for the historical setting will enable men to look into the soul of character. The knowledge of the past will illumine the present and make hopeful for the future.

The most important department in present College work, and the one discipline which needs the greatest emphasis in every way is our own native tongue, which bears within it the vigor of the Anglo-Saxon, and in which

we hear the march of the empire-building nations as they are encircling the globe. A certain, clear knowledge of English, as presupposed in the common standard adopted by the Colleges of the Middle States, should be a main requirement of entrance into a college. Deficiency in this branch should be alone enough to debar from advance until it is met. From class to class English must be put on the same level with those branches that most largely determine a student's standing; and no man should receive a diploma who has not learned to use our common tongue clearly and purely, for the ultimate test of real culture in American life is and will be the possession of undefiled English.

To attain such knowledge the philology and the history of the English language are not sufficient. The growing mind must be brought to drink constantly and deeply out of the broad stream of literature from Chaucer to Tennyson. While the great masters of perennial thought, of harmonious and finished form must most largely stand before the student, yet he should know and form his style from the many rather than the few. It is not the classroom work only which ought to count, but an additional course of reading should be constantly demanded, and the student should be stimulated to undertake reading much of which will be a delight and recreation. The test of all this study, the possibility of its application and influence, must be the constant and continuous writing of compositions from Freshmen to Senior year. Writing should take precedence of rhetorical exercises, and must again be the proving of such rhetorical knowledge and such literary criticism as the course can give. The work of English and the education in it demand regard in every branch; especially in the exactness of translation from any tongue, the purity of our native tongue must not be made to suffer. No use of English anywhere should be allowed, which injures the true idiom. These general principles need special application in Muhlenberg College, because of special antecedents and difficulties. Every endeavor must be made that in English speech and writing the graduates of Muhlenberg College shall more and

more take equal rank with men coming from schools that have the best English departments.

The great glory of higher education is that it lays chief stress upon the comparative method of study. It makes philosophy its leading discipline. Behind the real teaching of every branch there is a philosophy. The natural sciences in their acceptance of evolution have a philosophical basis that needs examination. Language, history and the problems of Biblical science rest upon philosophical foundations. The present attitude of thought, the spirit of the age, is colored by a philosophy. To know such philosophy and to be able to detect its strength and weakness makes independent men and living teachers. Liberal culture ought not only lead men to weigh the general laws of thinking, to study the reality of thought in the human soul as related to the body, but also to understand the great philosophic questions as they have grown in history.

With this general philosophic study which produces clear and fundamental thought there should be combined an ethical study which formulates the ethical trend of all thorough higher education. In this age of ethical emphasis we need a knowledge of the influence and insufficiency of utilitarian and rationalistic morality. With these tendencies students should learn to compare the separate fruits of Christianity to enable them in the stress of great problems to keep their moral balance. Christian ethics is, at the present, best approached through contrast with the other systems. The final impressions of Christian morality dare, however, not remain a mere intellectual matter; but morality must receive its power through the harmony of ethical Christian life in all activities of the College, particularly those that are representative.

The final effectiveness of moral life rests upon the Christian character of a college. This Christian character ought not be simply an atmosphere, but also an actual result of definite teaching. The older colleges tried to counteract and correct the defective moral tone of classic literature by religious teaching which emphasized the divine

government, the dignity of the human soul, the reality of God, and the supremacy of Christianity. Knowledge was sweetened by reverence and quickened to nobler self-sacrificing achievements. The modern colleges except those that are denominational and sometimes even these, have abandoned direct religious teaching, or so liberalized it as to make it indefinite and ineffective. The general spirit of morality is not proving sufficient to retain reverence and to create the highest type of manhood. There exists at the present a self-conscious individualism which, unless influenced by other agencies, does not overcome doubt, but rests often with pride in negations. The student of the older college had his struggles, but received real effective help from the College in gaining the victory. To-day religion is too much corrected for the student by science, and not science subdued by religion. For this reason, when the Church educates it must produce results which shall correct the neglect of the prevalent attitude toward religion. Yet the religious education dare not be wrong in method and out of relation to the thinking of a student. It should grow out of the Bible as this is practically studied. In the beauty of the thoughts of the Bible as literature and in its history, as in vessels of silver, the golden apples of living revelation must be presented. There is needed a true constructive study of the Bible to influence religious thinking and living anew.

The denominational college can also add such interpretations of its separate confession as is wise. But this dare not be done in a narrow way nor out of harmony with general culture, if it shall not be more harmful than helpful. Growing out of such teaching the true religious and moral life, influencing the whole tone of the Christian College, should be in every way superior. If the Christian College fosters no higher life, no more definite Christian manhood than the general College, it has lost its savor and is a dishonor to the Church and Christ.

In the attempt in some small measure to realize these ideals and their harmony there is need of self-sacrificing

men. Much praise is due to those who have labored in the past. The present and future call for more labor, more sacrifice, more men of the highest intellectuality and of the best teaching ability, who are willing to serve, not for filthy lucre but for Christ and the Church, in the Church's institutions. The Church must take its young men, educate and retain them. It must show them in contrast with human glory the better choice of Christian service, in which they can impress Christian ideals upon the generations to come.

To accomplish this aim and to partially fulfil hopes entertained, the fullest co-operation of the churches of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania is necessary. If they will rise to their present opportunity and put Muhlenberg College on such a basis that it can be true to its present mission, then the future will be rich in promise. Let it be understood that this presidency will not be judged for failures which must come where equipment is lacking.

In other respects I court the most free criticism from those that are able to judge. Constant criticism is the necessity of living and advancing education. And it is time that sensitiveness on this point should cease in the Church. It is eminently proper that when criticism rightly calls for radical change this change should be wisely made. True growth at times needs acceleration. No favor of persons and no respect of men ought here to interfere. But true criticism must be friendly, fair and just, and not the idle gossip of those who little appreciate the difficulties and are less able to suggest the real cure. It must not be proclaimed from the housetops and injure what is good, estrange sympathy and hinder support, but be judiciously directed to aid in better construction.

With such purposes I am willing to enter upon my work, realizing that wisdom must come from on High if human thought is to help and human endeavor to succeed. As long as I recognize that the harmony which now prevails and the best sentiment of the Church will support my policy, so long will I work. If, however, the Church

hampers true advance, or if ever my policy should seem disadvantageous, then it is time for this presidency to cease. Leadership in the institutions of the Church, which is built simply on sentiment of past efficiency, on respect and piety for things long ago accomplished, and not on present work and advance is a wrong to education and to the highest interests of the Church. The laborers deserve their rest in due time, but such rest ought not to be taken in a professorial chair.

With such determination, then, to serve all, but independent in subjection to high ideals of service, this presidency will seek with God's help to stand for the best, the noblest, the truest in thought and character, for growth in every grace, for vital Christianity and that conservative Lutheranism which is most earnestly progressive, real and active ; which by the wide culture of personality seeks to form men of God, as free as they are loveable, as strong as they are gentle, to be true to every trust in time, but above all true to the great final aim of the soul. For that the soul shall live is the end-all and be-all. But the soul shall live by growing up into its eternal source. Well may we, then, in conclusion, adopt the words of Browning, the poet of hope, when he says :

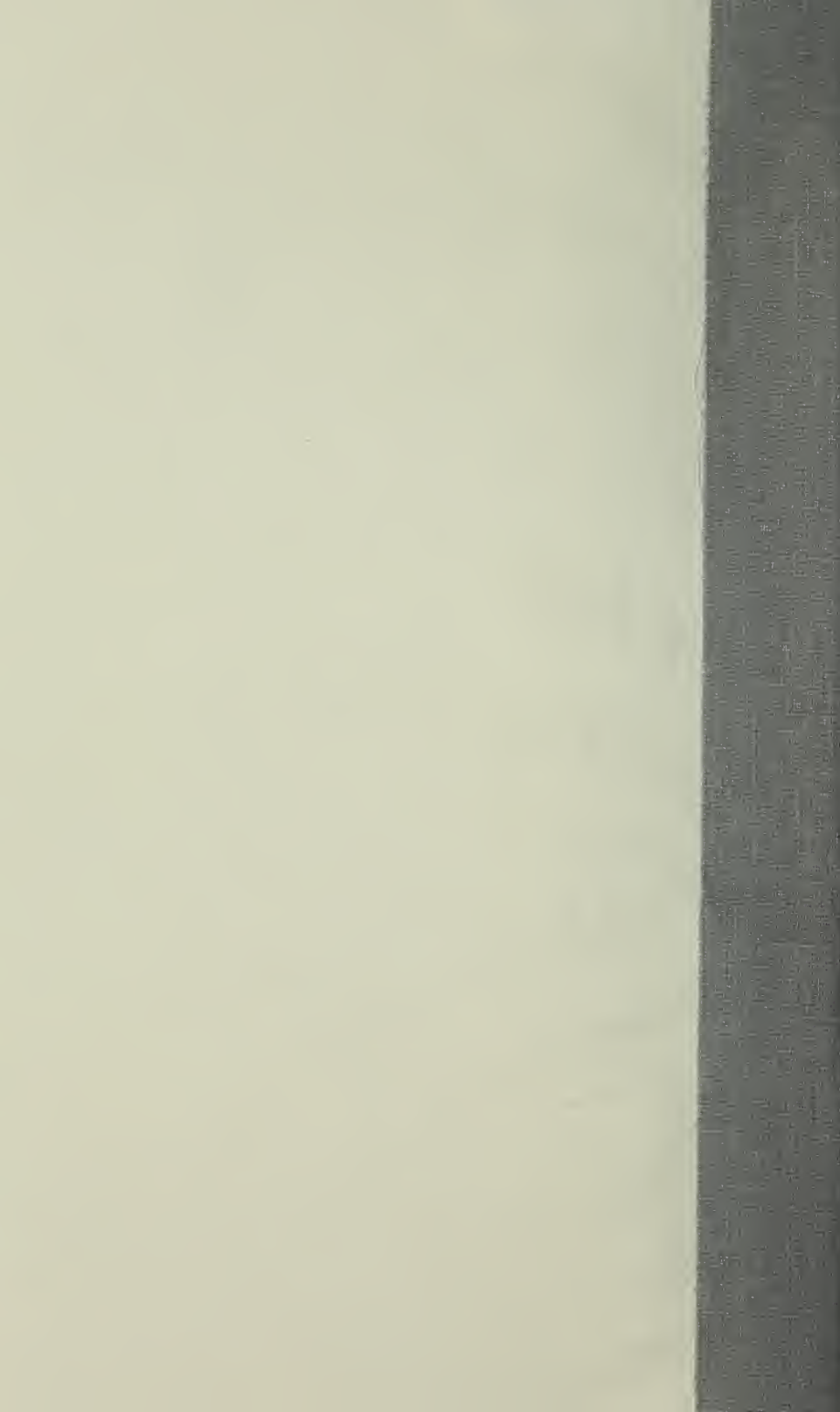
“ What is left for us, save, in growth
Of soul to rise up,
From the gift looking to the Giver,
And from the cistern to the river,
And from the finite to infinity,
And from man's dust to God's Divinity.”

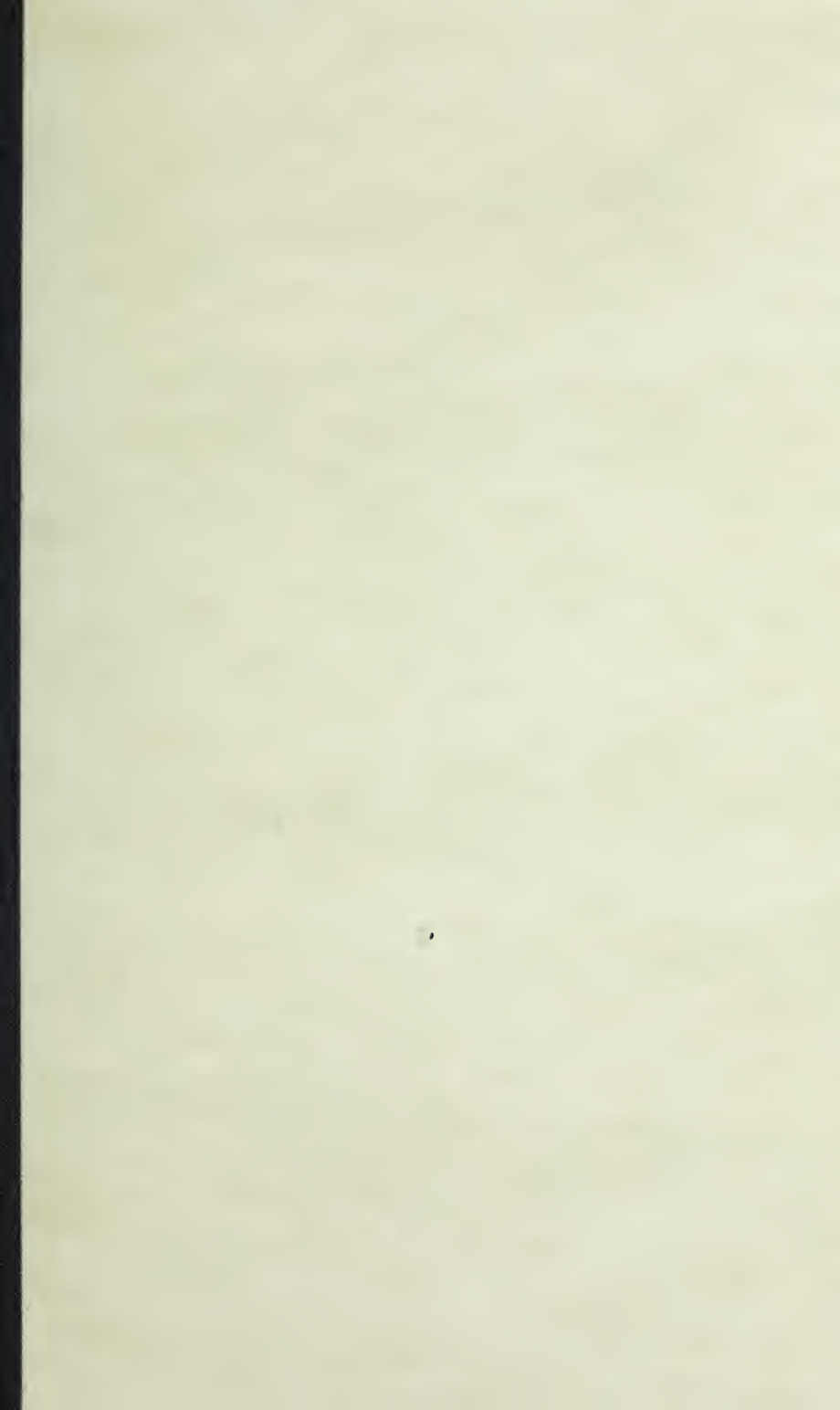


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